

## **AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 9, 2004 MEETING**

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Nelson, Mike Sullivan, Jim Opaluch, Everett Stuart, Bob Sutton, Judy Bailey, Eleanor Sasso

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jason Pezzullo, Geoff DiCenso, Eileen Naughton

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Ayars

GUESTS: Fredericka Bettinger and Peter Arnold, South County Conservancy

The meeting began at 5:15 p.m, at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI.

Kevin Nelson made a motion, seconded by Jim Opaluch to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2004 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Kevin Nelson made a motion, seconded by Bob Sutton, to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2004 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Freddie Bettenger and Peter Arnold, South County Conservancy, spoke to the Commission regarding the Fenner and Ricci properties, Charlestown. The Fenner and Ricci farms adjoin, and Fenner is an applicant for development rights. The Ricci family will donate developments right to the Commission if the rights to Fenner are acquired. Fenner was scored at the October meeting and received slightly fewer points (total score 22.2) than necessary for acceptance. The Commission requested additional information from the South County Conservancy regarding the project and the relationship between the two farms, which was provided by Fredericka Bettinger and Mr. Arnold. After discussion, the Commission requested DEM and NRCS staff visit the Fenner farm to re-evaluate soil quality, and requested of the Conservancy an application from the Ricci's.

The Commission discussed the draft rules, and in particular the scoring sheet. Kevin Nelson made a motion, seconded by Bob Sutton, to approve the scoring sheet. The motion passed unanimously.

Everett Stuart made a motion, seconded by Bob Sutton to re-score all previously accepted farms under the new scoring system. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Kevin Nelson, to schedule the public hearing for the rule amendments on January 13, 2005, 5pm. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission discussed projects in negotiation:

Peckham, Tiverton - Ken Ayars and Lisa Primiano recently met with Pete Peckham, who agreed to begin negotiation for development rights. Lisa will draft an offer letter based on a recent appraisal, for review by the Commission. The Commission has \$500,000 in USDA funds, and DEM received a grant of approximately \$500,000 from US Fish and Wildlife toward the acquisition.

Salisbury, Johnston - Bob Sutton will meet with Wayne Salisbury in the near future. The appraisal is complete, and undergoing review and amendment.

Smith, Tiverton (Clark Tree Farm) - Scored and accepted at the October meeting. The Tiverton Land Trust has committed \$50,000 and the Nature Conservancy has been approached. The owner is facing sale of the farm because of financial and family pressures. The Commission expressed willingness to match the Tiverton Land Trust contribution of \$50,000 and match other local contributions toward the project (a vote was not taken).

Carpenter, So. Kingstown - The Commission has committed \$300,000, and the South Kingstown Land Trust (SKLT) received approximately \$200,000 from USDA. SKLT is negotiating, and Mr. Carpenter expressed an interest in selling fee with a development rights easement, with life estate and use of the property for farming.

Wallace, So. Kingstown - No new developments regarding the property boundary issue between Dave Wallace and the adjoining Cottrell farm. Negotiations on hold until resolved.

Neale, Ceppi and Dutra Farms, Jamestown - Appraisals ordered.

Knight, Scituate - Appraisal recently received and undergoing DEM review.

Escobar, Portsmouth - Appraisal undergoing DEM review.

Panciera, Hopkinton - Survey recently completed. Owner plans to subdivide out one house lot which requires town approval, and closing cannot occur until this is accomplished. Purchase and Sale agreement is signed, appraisal and survey complete.

Green, No. Smithfield - Negotiations largely completed. Bob Sutton discussing funding contributions with partnering organizations.

Mike Sullivan reported he is in conversation with the Governor's Office concerning appointing a replacement for Geoff DiCenso.

Ken Ayars reported on the budget status. Recent Passage of the 2004 Open Space bond provides 15 million toward state farm and open space protection efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Kenneth D. Ayars, Chief  
Division of Agriculture, RIDEM